Sully, Thomas

DRAWER 19A

Artists-S

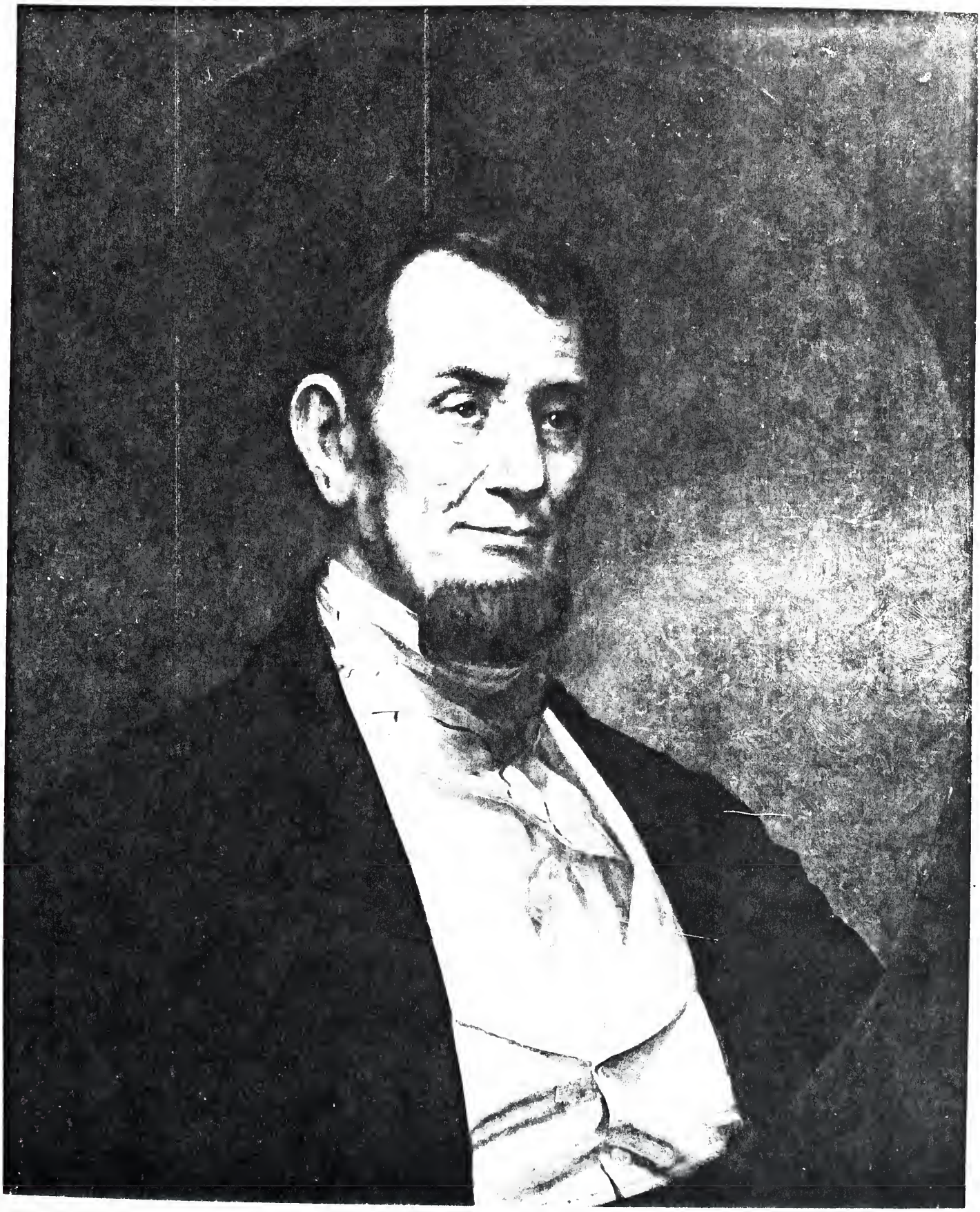
# Artists of Abraham Lincoln portraits

## Thomas Sully

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the

Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection



857 N. Howard St
Baltimore, Md.
May 24th 1941.

Mr. Louis C. Warren,
Director, Lincoln National Life Foundation,
Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Dear Sir:

Sometime ago your Baltimore representative, Mr. George J. Claustice, kindly procured from you and presented me with a circular which you had published concerning the Littlefield portrait of Lincoln. He then suggested that I communicate with you concerning any interesting Lincoln portraits that I might have for sale. I conduct an antique shop at the above address and now have a portrait of Lincoln — oil painting 22" wide by 27" high. The canvas is old but the painting, — framed under glass, appears to be in very fine

condition. I have discovered no signature and there probably is none unless on the part of the canvas under the edge of the frame. On the back of the canvas are the initials T.S. in monogram form, and the date 1862. I am familiar with the work of Thomas Sully but this, while well-executed, does not seem to me to have been painted by Sully. On the published list of portraits ~~two~~ painted by Sully are two of Abraham Lincoln but the date is not 1862.

I enclose a kodak picture of the portrait. The light streak between the top of the head and the edge of the frame is a reflection on the glass and the outline of a figure to the right of

Mr. Warren - 3

Lincoln's head is a reflection of the writer in the position of taking the snap-shot. I send this photo for the purpose of learning whether you have any engraved or lithographed copy of this portrait or a copy of it in any other form. I do not recall having seen any copy of this portrait or any picture based on it. (A shadow under the beard on the photo makes the beard appear longer than it is shown on the painting where it is quite stubby.)

If you are in position to give me any information and care to do so, I shall greatly appreciate it.

Very truly yours,

Garfield Berlinsky

GARFIELD BERLINSKY

P.S. Kindly return the snap-shot with your reply.

Same hand as our Brady 85
LDW

Sully

June 5, 1941

Mr. Garfield Berlinsky
857 N. Howard St.
Baltimore, Maryland

Dear Mr. Berlinsky:

Thank you for calling to our attention the oil painting of Abraham Lincoln in your possession.

It appears to us that it may have been the painting of some individual made by Sully in 1862 and then later on Sully or some other painter took a photograph of Lincoln made by Brady in 1864 and painted in the Lincoln head over the old portrait.

Most certainly the body, the bust, headwear, etc. are not Lincoln's as he was never known to have worn a white scarf, white tie, etc. so I feel very sure that you have is a composite painting.

Very truly yours,

LAW:BST

Director

ALBERT SCHWARTZ
SCHWARTZ GALLERIES
*Fine Arts*
915 STEINWAY HALL
113 WEST 57TH ST. :: NEW YORK CITY

Nov. 20, 1942.

Dr. Louis A. Warren,
Lincoln National Life Ins. Co.,
Fort Wayne, Ind.

Dear Dr. Warren:

Through the courtesy of Mr. E. A. Gardner, a well known collector of Lincolniana and by his suggestion, I am sending you under separate cover a photo of a painting of Lincon credited to Thos. Sulley. This picture has just come to me for sale and I am writing to ascertain whether or not you have any record of this picture or know anything about it. Also would your company be interested in the purchase thereof.

Thanking you in advance for any information that you might give me, I remain,

Most repectfully yours,

Albert Schwartz

December 2, 1942

Mr. Albert Schwartz
Schwartz Galleries, 915 Steinway Hall
113 West 57th Street
New York, New York

My dear Mr. Schwartz:

We received the interesting picture of the Sulley painting and we are at loss to know whether or not this is the same painting which was originally owned by Mr. Berlinsky in Baltimore who wrote us with respect to a Sulley painting in 1941. It was his understanding that Sulley made two painting of Lincoln.

The Berlinsky portrait was 22" by 27" and on the back of the canvas there appeared the initials S. T. and the date 1862. Will you kindly advise us if your client has this identical portrait.

Very truly yours,

LAW:CRS
L.A.Warren

Director

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ALBERT SCHWARTZ
SCHWARTZ GALLERIES
*Fine Arts*
915 STEINWAY HALL
113 WEST 57TH ST. :: NEW YORK CITY

Dec. 18, 1942.

Mr Louis A. Warren,
Lincoln National Life Foundation,
Fort Wayne, Ind.

Dear Mr Warren:

Referring to your letter of Dec. 2nd and the painting by Sulley which I wrote you about, I find that this painting comes from Baltimore and probably is the identical one owned by a Mr Berlinsky of that city.

Would it be possible to purchase a complete collection of Lincoln Lore? If so at what price?

Thanking you for your kind reply, I remain with compliments of the season,

Very truly yours,

Albert Schwartz

The Lincoln Lore is for a Boys Club.

December 22, 1942

Mr. Albert Schwartz
915 Steinway Hall
113 W. 57th St.
New York, N. Y.

My dear Mr. Schwartz:

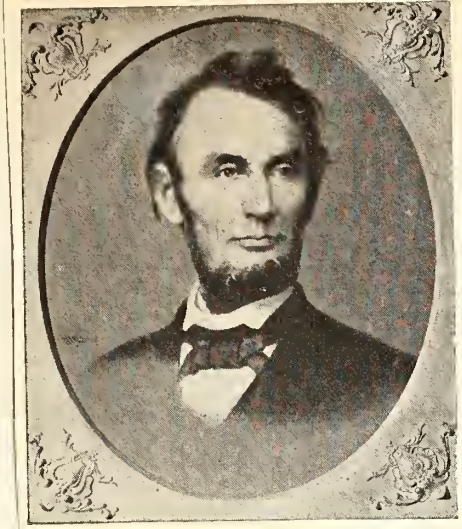
Thank you for your further information about the Sulley portrait.

I regret exceedingly that we have very few back numbers of Lincoln Lore except in the bound volumes and I rather feel they will be somewhat too expensive for a boys club. I am, however, enclosing one of the little advertisements which we used at the time the books were published.

Very truly yours,

LAW:WM
enc.

Director



THE LINCOLN PORTRAIT
*Most valuable in new collection*

No collection of Early American paintings would be complete without portraits, and this new exhibit in the Center Gallery offers two outstanding examples: Abraham Lincoln by Thomas Sully (1783-1872), which belongs to the permanent collection, and a contemporary copy of the famous Athenaeum Portrait of George Washington by Gilbert Stuart (1755-1826), lent anonymously. This copy was made by Ezra Ames (1768-1836), whose many portraits of dignitaries are scattered over New York State.

The Lincoln is an idealized delineation of the martyred president, done in two days' time just two weeks after his assassination on April 14, 1865, from a photograph, although the history of this painting indicates that the first sketch was made from life. An oval head study, size 24x30 inches, it is the most valuable painting in the new Fisher collection.

Sully was born in Lincolnshire, England; his parents were actors who came to this country in 1792 with their family and settled in Charleston, South Carolina. Thomas began to study painting in his early teens, was associated with his eldest brother, Lawrence, the miniature painter, in Richmond, Virginia, until Lawrence's death in 1803. In 1808 he moved to Philadelphia and for the next thirty years was engaged in painting America's most illustrious citizens. For fifteen years he served as a director of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, declining the office of president in 1842. His portraits, combining the Stuart manner and the Lawrence technique, were in great demand and his output was large, some twenty-six hundred paintings by his hand having been accounted for. He is particularly noted for the fresh quality and happy elegance of his paintings, making his portraits a source of aesthetic pleasure.

Southern Coll



Nov 1944

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